

COLLECTIONS OVERVIEWS

ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN AND ENGINEERING

I. SCOPE

The subjects of architecture, design, and engineering occur across all formats and can be found throughout the General Collections and in various Special Format and Area Studies divisions in the Library, including Geography and Map, Manuscript, Rare Books & Special Collections, the American Folklife Center, Recorded Sound, Performing Arts (stage and set design), and Motion Picture & Television. However, the primary custodian of special format materials in these subject areas at the Library of Congress is the Prints and Photographs (P&P) Division. P&P collections in these subject areas further intersect with nearly every Library of Congress collecting area, including American History, European, African, Middle Eastern, Portuguese, Hispanic and Hispanic American Studies, Decorative Arts, Fine Arts, Science and Technology, Business, and Local History and Genealogy.

This overview focuses on the subjects of architecture, design, and engineering in the Prints and Photographs Division, and includes both documentary materials and those produced as the original creative works of practitioners in these fields, as well as photography and printmaking. Included are measured drawings and field notes and drawings; original, theoretical, design, working, and construction drawings; job files, correspondence, photographs and documents; record, documentary, journalistic, commercial and master photographic prints, negatives, and transparencies; posters, fine and historical prints, master drawings, cartoon and caricature, illustration, and graphic design; and written historical and descriptive data. P&P's substantial holdings of Photography and Graphic Arts are covered in separate Collection Overviews.

II. SIZE

Over 2,000,000 items, including multiple formats (based upon the P&P Stewardship Report)

III. GENERAL RESEARCH STRENGTHS

The Library's general research strength in this area is in graphic and photographic documentation of the history and development of American architecture, landscape architecture, public monuments and sculpture, engineering, planning, interior design, and industrial design. A strong supporting strength is in works, primarily photographs, documenting architecture, public monuments and sculpture, and engineering outside of the United States, and foreign sources for American works, as well as American innovations and contributions in all of these disciplines outside of the United States

IV. AREAS OF DISTINCTION

Documentary Surveys:

In the 1920s, when it initiated its Pictorial Archives of Early American Architecture (PAEAA) by acquiring photographic negatives of historic buildings from American architectural photographers, the Library began its pioneering and unparalleled efforts to commission and collect documentary surveys of existing (primarily American) buildings and sites. This work continued with the establishment of the Carnegie Survey of the Architecture of the South (CSAS) in the 1920s and 1930s, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in 1933, the Archive of Hispanic Culture (1940s), the Historic American Engineering Record (1969), and the Historic American Landscape Survey (2000). Additionally the Library has acquired documentary photographic surveys carried out by others, such as the Seagram County Court House Archives, the American Firehouse Survey, the Joseph Allen Collection, the Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii photographic survey of the Russian Empire and the William C. Brumfield photographic archive of pre-soviet architecture, and a part of the John Margolies photographic archive of roadside America.

Photographic Archives (non-survey):

Beyond the strictly documentary photographic archives outlined above, no other institution has the depth and range of work by American architectural photographers, often including their original negatives, transparencies, and digital files. Outstanding among these are the works of Frances Benjamin Johnston, Samuel Gottscho and William Schleisner, Theodor Horydczak, Irving Underhill, F. S. Lincoln, Sigurd Fischer, Balthazar Korab, Philip Trager, and Carol M. Highsmith. The archives of architectural historians who also were photographers include those of Barbara Wriston and H. Allen Brooks, as well as William Brumfield (mentioned above).

The archives of commercial photographic firms and publications that employed multiple photographers are also a rich source of images in architecture, design, and engineering. These include the Albertype Company, The Detroit Publishing Company, *Look* magazine, *U. S. News and World Report*, and the photographic morgue of the *New York World Telegram and Sun*. One of the most notable non-commercial photographic archives is that of the Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information (FSA/OWI), produced by the U. S. government in the 1930s and 1940s.

Finally, the tens of thousands of architectural photographs deposited in the Library of Congress for copyright constitute a unique and important archive in and of themselves and can be found in many locations in P&P, but most readily in its self-indexing Geographic Files, where images of buildings and sites can be found under their location in a number of sizes and formats, including stereographs and souvenir brochures.

American Creator Archives and Works:

No other collection parallels the combined chronological range and qualitative depth of the Library's holdings of the archives or examples of the work of individuals and firms whose professional contributions have significantly influenced or defined developments in the fields of American architecture, design, and engineering. The contributions of such figures as B. Henry Latrobe, Charles Bulfinch, Frank Lloyd Wright, Cass Gilbert, James Renwick, Richard Upjohn, Thomas U. Walter, Napoleon Le Brun, Charles McKim, Stanford White, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Winold Reiss, Louis Skidmore, Richard Neutra, Raymond Loewy, Charles M. Goodman, Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, Victor Gruen, Paul Rudolph, I. M. Pei, James Ingo Freed, Kevin Roche, Cesar Pelli, Paul Stephenson Oles, Rafael Viñoly, Maya Lin, and hundreds more are represented in holdings that can range from a small group of drawings to entire archives, and include the special format materials representing the work of many engineers from the former Engineering Societies Library (New York).

Technologies, Materials, Forms and Types:

The new and innovative technologies, uses of materials, forms and types of buildings, structures, sites, and products which American creators have contributed to world architecture, engineering, and design are a particular focus of the Library's collecting. Barns, court houses, lighthouses, bridges, theaters, hotels, places of worship, dams, skyscrapers, railroad stations, airports, stores, houses, furniture, fixtures, automobiles, appliances, and even packaging are well represented, to name only a few examples. The range and depth of P&P's holdings of drawings, prints, photographs, postcards, printed ephemera, and other pictorial works that document these contributions is unsurpassed.

Media and Process:

Essential to an understanding of training, education, and practice in the fields of architecture, design and engineering are the processes and media in which the practitioners worked. P&P's holdings in the various forms and media used for the recording, rendering, and marketing of American buildings, structures, and manufactured objects; in the development of professional practice in these fields; in the changing process of design; and in the effect of new materials on the work and achievements in these fields, are both extensive and various. From student drawings to site sketches, presentation renderings, working and construction drawings and documents, and full size details, as-built drawings, and promotional and documentary photography, the record of the process of design and construction is represented here as no where else. In the newest frontier, born-digital materials, the Library is at the forefront of institutions attempting to develop strategies to collect preserve and make them available.

V. ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

As reflected through the Prints & Photographs Online Catalog.

VI. WEAKNESSES/EXCLUSIONS

It is inevitable that any collection attempting to cover the whole of architecture, design and engineering and in such a wide range of media, will have gaps and weaknesses.

In general the Library, like most other American collecting institutions, today is engaged in an effort to better represent in its collections the significant achievements and contributions to American history and culture of all ethnic and racial groups.

Throughout the collections the greatest weakness is in materials documenting the recent practice of architecture, design, and engineering and, in particular during the past twenty to thirty years, and in particular American work abroad, especially in China.

In the representation of creators, conspicuous weaknesses are in the work of architects practicing during the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, especially those trained under the Beaux-Arts system, and as noted above, in more recent practice during the last twenty to thirty years, and in born-digital materials.

The photographic collections are notably weak in color documentation and in their representation of sites and structures in Asia, East Asia, Indonesia, central and southern Africa, and central and South America (other than those in the Archive of Hispanic Culture).